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PEARLS OF ISLAM

EDITED BY
MUHAMMAD AMIN
Barrister at Law



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MECCA
Birth place of the Holy Prophet

**That great lover of Islamic
philosophy and culture**

Nawab Sir NIZAMAT JUNG Bahadur

*This book is respectfully dedicated as a
token of the author's deep respect for
his noble qualities of head and heart*

INTRODUCTION

I have been asked by my old friend Mr Muhammad Amin to write a short introduction to his new book "The Pearls of Islam" and I have great pleasure in expressing my sentiments in the following few lines

As a student of Islam I had opportunities to study closely the life of the great Prophet and I can say at once that he was one of the greatest teachers of the Unity of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Muhammad Sahib spent the first forty years of his life with nature gazing upon earth and sky and upon mountains and plains where clouds hovered and rains produced herbs and plants to sustain the life of man and bird and beast. He pondered on all these things to find out the mystery of life and the destiny of man. For some years he meditated in a mountain cave near Mecca and fervently prayed for light till God enlightened his soul.

He was a true ascetic. He practised austerity in his daily life. He took simple and plain food, and slept on a hard mat till the very last moment of his glorious life. Muhammad Sahib never preached mere theories, his mission was to face facts and to

uproot the evils that beset mankind. He abolished idolatry, the burial of daughters, drinking, debauchery, gambling, usury and blood-feuds. The people of Mecca jeered at him, reviled him and persecuted him for introducing these reforms, but he was gently patient and never showed any despair or fear, having full faith in the guidance of God to accomplish his noble task. His actual work in life can be described as "Moral Guidance along the Path of Noble Achievement". In the law of inheritance this great Prophet, by allowing a definite share to women and restricting the right of testamentary disposition, verily raised the status of women as heirs.

Mr Muhammad Amin in his great enthusiasm for spreading a correct knowledge of Islam among the English-knowing public has rendered great service in attempting to clear several doubts and misunderstandings about Islam. But there is a vast number of people who cannot read English, and his beautiful book deserves to be translated for their benefit in their vernaculars.

NIHAL SINGH B A , LL B ,
Advocate, High Court,
Lahore

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PREFACE

The Life of Muhammad and the Essay on Islam published here are from the pen of the well-known British writer Mr Stanley Lane-Poole I have abridged them for the benefit of the busy reader who cannot spare time to read the voluminous book published by Stanley Lane-Poole in 1883 I thank Sardar Nihal Singh, B A , LL B , for writing an introduction to the book

MUHAMMAD AMIN

Life of Muhammad

By Stanley Lane-Poole

Muhammad was born in 571 A D He early became an orphan and was brought up first by his grandfather Abd-el-Muttalib and after his death by his uncle Abu Talib, both of whom showed a love as of father and mother

In his childhood he was sent to pasture the sheep of his tribe, the Kureish, on the hills and valleys round Mecca He was wont to look back with pleasure to the early days, saying that God called never a prophet save from among the sheep-folds And, doubtless, it was then that he developed that reflective disposition of mind which at length led him to seek the reform of his people

Later on his wealthy kinswoman Khadijah employed him to carry on her trading journeys, and he seems to have taken so kindly to the duty, which involved responsibilities, and to have acquitted himself so worthily that she fell in love with him and presented him with her hand The marriage was a singularly happy one, though Muhammad was scarcely twenty-five and his wife

nearly forty, and it brought him that repose and exemption from daily toil which he needed in order to prepare his mind for his great work. But beyond that it gave him a loving woman's heart, that was the first to believe in his mission, that was ever ready to console him in his despair and to keep alive within him the thin flickering flame of hope when no man believed in him—not even himself—and the world was black before his eyes.

We know very little of the next fifteen years. Khadijah bore him sons and daughters, but only the daughters lived. We hear of his joining a league for the protection of the weak and oppressed, and there is a legend of his having acted with wise tact and judgment as arbitrator in a dispute among the great families of Mecca on the occasion of the rebuilding of Kaaba. During this time, moreover, he relieved his impoverished uncle of the charge of his son Ali—afterwards the Bayard of Islam—and he freed and adopted a certain captive Zeyd, and these two became his most devoted friends and disciples. Up to the age of forty his unpretending modest way of life had attracted but little notice from his townspeople. He was only known as a simple, upright man, whose life was severely pure and refined, and whose true desert-sense of honour and faith-keeping had won him the high title of El-Amin, "The Trusty."

In his habits he was extremely simple, though he bestowed great care on his person. His eating and drinking, his dress and his furniture, retained, even when he had reached the fulness of power, their almost primitive nature. 'He is more modest than a virgin behind her curtain,' it was said of him. He was most indulgent to his inferiors, and would never allow his awkward little page to be scolded, whatever he did. 'Ten years,' said Anas, his servant, was I about the Prophet, and he never said as much as "uff" to me.' He was very affectionate towards his family. He was very fond of children. He would stop them in the streets and pat their little cheeks. He never struck any one in his life. When asked to curse some one, he replied, 'I have not been sent to curse, but to be a mercy to mankind.' He visited the sick, followed any bier he met, accepted the invitation of a slave to dinner, mended his own clothes, milked his goats, and waited upon himself. He never first withdrew his hand out of another man's palm, and turned not before the other had turned. He was the most faithful protector of those he protected, the sweetest and most agreeable in conversation, those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence, those who came near him loved him, they who described him would say, 'I have never seen his like either before or after.' He was of great taciturn-

ity, but when he spoke it was with emphasis and deliberation, and no one could ever forget what he said

He would kindle the fire, sweep the floor, and milk the goats himself Aisha tells us that he slept upon a mat, and that he mended his clothes, and even clouted his shoes with his own hand For months together he did not get a sufficient meal The little food that he had was always shared with those who dropped in to partake of it Indeed, outside the Prophet's house was a bench or gallery, on which were always to be found a number of the poor, who lived entirely on his generosity, and were hence called 'the people of the bench' His ordinary food was dates and water or barley-bread, milk and honey were his luxuries of which he was fond, but which he rarely allowed himself The fare of the desert seemed most congenial to him, even when he was sovereign of Arabia

Muhammad was fully forty before he felt himself called to be an apostle to his people He used to wander about the hills alone, brooding over things, he shunned the society of men, and solitude became a passion to him

At length came the crisis He was spending the sacred months on Mount Hira, a huge barren rock, torn by cleft and hollow ravine, standing out solitary in the full white glare of the desert sun,

shadowless, flowerless, without well or rill Here, in a cave, Muhammad gave himself up to prayer and fasting One day he heard a voice say ! " Cry " " What shall I cry ? " he answers—the question that has been burning in his heart during all his mental struggles—

' Cry ' in the name of thy Lord, who created,
Created man from blood
Cry ' for thy Lord is the Bountifullest
Who taught with pen
Taught man what he knew not '

Muhammad arose trembling, and went to Khadija, and told her what he had seen , and she did her woman's part, and believed in him and soothed his terror, and bade him hope for the future And so he went again on his solitary wanderings, hearing strange sound Doubting, wondering, hoping, he had fain put an end to a life which had become intolerable in its changings from hope to despair, when again he heard the voice, " Thou art the messenger of God, and I am Gabriel " Conviction at length seized hold on him, he was indeed to bring a message of good tidings to the Arabs, the message of God through His angel Gabriel He went back to Khadija exhausted in mind and body " Wrap me, wrap me," he said, and the word came unto him—

O thou who art wrapped, arise up and warn !
And thy Lord magnify,

And thy raiment purify,
And shun abomination !
And grant not favours to gain increase !
And wait for thy Lord

We are not concerned to draw the lines of demarcation between enthusiasm and ecstasy and inspiration. It is sufficient that he believed them to be a message from on high, and that for years of neglect and persecution, and for years of triumph and conquest, he acted upon his belief.

Muhammad now (A D 612) came forward as the Apostle of the one God to the people of Arabia, he was at last well assured that his God was of a truth the God, and that He had indeed sent him with a message to his people, that they too might turn from their idols and serve the living God. He was almost alone, but he was no longer afraid, he had learnt that self-trust which is the condition of all true work. At first he spoke to his near kinsmen and friends, and it is impossible to overrule the importance of the fact that his closest relations and those who lived under his roof were the first to believe and the staunchest of faith. The prophet who is with honour in his own home need appeal to no stronger proof of his sincerity, and that Muhammad was "a hero to his own valet" is an invincible argument for his earnestness.

The motherly Khadija had at once, with a

woman's instinct, divined her husband's heart and confirmed his fainting hope by her firm faith in him. His dearest friends Zeyd and Ali, were the next converts, and though, to his grief, he could never induce his lifelong protector, Abu-Talib, to abandon the gods of his fathers, yet the old man loved him nonetheless, and said, when he heard of Ali's conversion, "Well, my son, he will not call thee to aught save what is good, wherefore thou art free to cleave unto him." A priceless aid was gained in the accession of Abu-Bekr, who was destined to succeed Muhammad as his first Caliph of Islam, and whose calm judgment and quick sagacity, joined to a gentle and compassionate heart, were of incalculable service to the faith. Abu-Bekr was one of the wealthiest merchants of Mecca, and exercised no small influence among his fellow-citizens, as much by his character as his position. Like Muhammad, he had a nick-name, Es-Siddiq "The True" *The True* and *The Trusty*,—auspicious names for the future of the religion.

Five converts followed in Abu-Bekr's steps, among them Osman, the third Caliph and Talha, the man of war. The ranks of the faithful were swelled from humbler sources. There were many negro slaves in Mecca, of them the first to be converted was the Abyssinian Bilal, the original Muezzin of Islam, and ever a devoted disciple of

the Prophet These and others from the Koreish raised the number of Muslims to more than thirty souls by the fourth year of Muhammad's mission—thirty in three long years, and few of them men of influence

This small success had been achieved with very little opposition from the idolaters Muhammad had not spoken much in public, and when he did speak to strangers, he refrained from directly attacking their worship, and only enjoined them to worship the one God who had created all things But in A D 615 Muhammad entered upon a more public career He summoned the Koreish to a conference at the hill of Es-Safa, and said, "I am come to you as a warner, and as the forerunner of a fearful punishment I cannot protect you in this world, nor can I promise you aught in the next life, unless you say, there is no god, but Allah " He was laughed to scorn, and the assembly broke up, but from this time he ceased not to preach to the people of a punishment that would come upon the unbelieving city He told them, in the fiery language of the early Suras, how God had punished the old tribes of the Arabs who would not believe in His messengers, how the Flood had swallowed up the people who would not hearken to Noah He swore unto them, by the wonderful sights of nature, by the noonday brightness, by the night when she spreadeth her

veil, by the day when it appeareth in glory, that a like destruction would come upon them if they did not turn away from their idols and serve God alone. He enforced his message with every resource of language and metaphor, till he made it burn in the ears of the people. And then he told them of the last day, when a just reckoning should be taken of the deeds they had done, and he spoke of Paradise and Hell with all the glow of Eastern imagery. The people were moved, terrified, conversions increased.

It was time the Koreish should take some steps. If the idols were destroyed, what would come to them, the keepers of the idols, and their renown throughout the land? How should they retain the allegiance of the neighbouring tribes who came to worship their several divinities at the Kaaba. The chiefs were seriously alarmed, and resolved on a more active policy. Hitherto they had merely ridiculed the professors of this new faith, they would now take stronger measures. Muhammad himself they dared not touch, for he belonged to a noble family, which, though it was reduced and impoverished, had deserved well of the city, and which, moreover, was now headed by a man who was revered throughout Mecca, and was none other than the adoptive father and protector of Muhammad himself. Nor was it safe to attack the other chief men among the Muslims, for

the blood revenge was no light risk. They were thus compelled to content themselves with the sorry satisfaction of torturing the black slaves who had joined the obnoxious faction. They exposed them on the scorching sand, and withheld water till they recanted—which they sometime did, only to profess the faith once more when they were let go. The first Muezzin (Bilal) alone remained steadfast as he lay half-stifled he would only answer "Ahad! Ahad!"—"One (God)! One!"—till Abu-Bekr came and bought his freedom as he was wont to do for many of the miserable victims. Muhammad was very gentle with these forced renegades, he knew what stuff men are made of, and he bade them be of good cheer for their lips, so that their hearts were sound.

At last moved by the sufferings of his lowly followers, he advised them to seek a refuge in Abyssinia—"a land of righteousness, wherein no man is wronged," and in the fifth year of his mission (616) eleven men and four women left Mecca secretly, and were received in Abyssinia with welcome and peace. These first emigrants were followed by more the next year, till the number reached one hundred. The Koreish were very wroth at the escape of their victims, and sent ambassadors to the Nejashy, the Christian King of Abyssinia, to demand that the refugees should be given up to them. But the Nejashy assembled

his bishops, and sent for the Muslims and asked them why they had fled, and one of them answered and said

“O King! We lived in ignorance, idolatry, and unchastity, the strong oppressed the weak, we spoke untruth, we violated the duties of hospitality. Then a Prophet arose, one whom we knew from our youth, with whose descent and conduct and good faith and morality we are all well acquainted. He told us to worship one God, to speak truth, to keep good faith, to assist our relations, to fulfil the rights of hospitality, and to abstain from all things impure, ungodly, unrighteous. And he ordered us to say prayers, give alms and to fast. We believed in him, we followed him. But our countrymen persecuted us, tortured us, and tried to cause us to forsake our religion, and now we throw ourselves upon thy protection. Wilt thou not protect us?” And he recited a chapter of the Koran, which spoke lovingly of Christ, and the King and the bishops wept upon their beards. And the King dismissed the messengers, and would not give up the men.

The Koreish, foiled in their attempt to recapture the fugitives, vented their malice on those believers who remained. Insults were heaped upon the Muslims, and persecution grew hotter each day. They threw unclean things at the Prophet, and vexed him in his every doing. The protection

of Abu-Talib alone saved him from personal danger. This refuge the Koreish determined to remove. They had attempted before, but had been turned back with a soft answer. They now went to the aged chief, bowed with the weight of fourscore years, and demanded that he should either compel his nephew to hold the peace, or else he should withdraw his protection. Having thus spoken they departed. The old man sent for Muhammad, and told him what they had said. "Now, therefore, save thyself and me also, and ~~cast~~ not upon me a burden heavier than I can bear," for he was grieved at the strife among his kindred, and would fain have seen Muhammad temporise with the Koreish. But though the Prophet believed that at length his uncle was indeed about to abandon him, his courage and high resolve never faltered. "Though they should set the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left to persuade me, yet while God commands me I will not renounce my purpose." But to lose his uncle's love,¹—he burst into tears, and turned to go. But Abu-Talib called aloud, "Son of my brother, come back." So he came. And he said, "Depart in peace, my nephew, and say whatsoever thou desirest, for, by the Lord, I will never deliver thee up."

The faithfulness of Abu-Talib was soon to be tried. At first, indeed, things looked brighter.

The old chief's firm bearing overawed the Koreish, and they were still more cowed by two great additions that were now joined to the Muslim ranks. One was Muhammad's uncle, Hamza, "the Lion of God," a mighty hunter and warrior of the true Arab mettle, whose sword was worth twenty of weaker men to the cause of Islam. The other was Omar, afterwards Caliph, whose fierce impulsive nature had hitherto marked him as a violent opponent of the new faith, but who presently proved himself one of the mainstays of Islam. The gain of two such men first frightened, then maddened the Koreish. The leaders met together and consulted what they should do. It was no longer a case of an enthusiast followed by a crowd of slaves and a few worthy merchants, it was a faction led by stout warriors, such as Hamza, Talha, Omar—half a dozen picked swordsmen, and the Muslims, emboldened by their new allies, were boldly surrounding the Kaaba, and performing the rites of their religion in the face of all the people. The Koreish resolved on extreme measures. They determined to shut off the obnoxious family of the Hashims from the rest of their kindred. The chiefs drew up a document, in which they vowed that they would not marry with the Hashims, nor buy and sell with them, nor hold with them any communication whatsoever, and this they hung up in the Kaaba.

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The Hashims were not many enough to fight the whole city, so they went, every man of them, save one, to the shi-b (or quarters) of Abu-Talib,—a long narrow mountain defile on the eastern skirts of Mecca cut off by rocks or walls from the city, except for one narrow gateway,—and there they shut themselves up. For though the ban did not forbid them to go about as heretofore, they knew that no soul would speak with them and that they would be subject to the maltreatment of the common crowd. So they collected their stores and waited. Everyman of the family, Muslim or pagan, cast in his lot with his kinsman, Muhammad saving only his own uncle, Abu-Lahab, a determined enemy of Islam.

For two long years the Hashims remained shut up in their quarters. Only at the pilgrimage time—when the blessed institution of the sacred months made violence sacrilege—could Muhammad come forth and speak unto the people of the things that were in his heart to say. Scarcely any converts were made during this weary time, and most of those who had previously been converted, and did not belong to the doomed clan, took refuge in Abyssinia, so that in the seventh year of Muhammad's mission there were probably not more than twelve Muslims of any weight who remained by him. Still the Hashims remained in their quarters. It seemed as if they must all perish.

their stores were almost gone, and the cries of starving children could be heard outside. Kind-hearted neighbours would sometimes smuggle in a camel's load of food, but it availed little. The Koreish themselves were growing ashamed of their work, and were wishing for an excuse for releasing their kinsmen. The excuse came in time. It was discovered that the deed of ban was eaten up by worms, and Abu-Talib turned the discovery to his advantage. The venerable chief went out and met the Koreish at the Kaaba and pointing to the crumbling leaf he bitterly reproached them for their hardness of heart towards their brethren. Then he departed. And straightway there rose up five chiefs, heads of great families, and, amid the murmurs of the fiercer spirits who were still for no quarter, they put on their armour, and going to the shi-b of Abu-Talib, bade the Hashims come forth in peace. And they came forth.

It was now the eighth year of Muhammad's mission, and for the last two years, wasted in excommunication, Islam had almost stood still, at least externally. For though Muhammad's patient bearing under the ban had gained over a few of his imprisoned clan to his side, he had made no converts beyond the walls of his quarter. During the sacred months he had gone forth to speak to the people,—to the caravans of strangers and the

folk at the fairs,—but he had no success, for hard behind him followed Abu-Lahab, the squinter, who mocked at him and told people not to believe him as he was a magician. And the people answered that his own kindred must know best what he was, and they would hear nothing from him.

The bold conduct of the five chiefs had indeed secured for Muhammad a temporary respite from persecution, but this relief was utterly outweighed by the troubles that now fell upon him and fitly gave that year the name of "The Year of Mourning." For soon after the revoking of the ban Abu-Talib died, and five weeks later Khadija. In the first Muhammad lost his ancient protector, who had faithfully guarded the Prophet from his childhood upwards, and, with the true Arab sentiment of kinship, had subjected himself and his clan to years of persecution and poverty in order to defend his brother's son from his enemies. The death of Khadija was even a heavier calamity to Muhammad. She first had believed in him, and she had ever been his angel of hope and consolation. To his death he cherished a tender regret for her, and when his young bride Aisha spoke of her as a "toothless old woman," he answered with indignation, "When I was poor, she enriched me, when they called me a liar, she alone believed in me, when all the world was against me, she alone remained true."

Muhammad might well feel himself alone in the world. Most of his followers were in Abyssinia, only a few tried friends remained at Mecca. All the city was against him; his protector was dead, and also his faithful wife. Dejected, almost hopeless, he would try a new field. If Mecca rejected him, might not Et-Taif give him welcome? He set out on his journey of seventy miles on foot, taking only Zeyd with him, and he told the people of Et-Taif his simple message. They stoned him out of the city for three miles. Bleeding and fainting, he paused to rest in an orchard, to recover strength before he went back to the insults of his own people. And when Zeyd asked him if he did not fear to throw himself again into the hands of the Koreish, he answered, "God will protect His religion and help His Prophet."

So this lonely man came back to dwell among his enemies. Though a brave Arab gentleman, compassionating his isolation, gave him the Bedaway pledge of protection, yet he well knew that the power of his foes made such protection almost useless, and at any time he might be assassinated. But the Koreish had not yet come to think of this last resource, and meanwhile a new prospect was opening out for Muhammad. The same year, as he was visiting the caravans of the pilgrims who had come from all parts of Arabia to worship at the Kaaba, he found a group of men

of Yethrib who were willing to listen to his words. He expounded to them the faith he was sent to preach, and he told them how his people had rejected him, and asked whether Yethrib would receive him. The men were impressed with his words and professed Islam, and promised to bring news the next year, then they returned home and talked of this matter to their brethren.

When the time of pilgrimage again came round, Muhammad waited at the appointed place in a secluded glen, and there met him men from the two pagan tribes of Yethrib, the clans of Khazraj and Aws—ten from one and two from the other. They told him of the willingness of their people to embrace Islam, and to make ready the city for his welcome. They plighted their faith with him in these words: "We will not worship save one God, we will not steal, nor commit adultery, nor kill our children, we will in no wise slander, nor will we disobey the Prophet in anything that is right." This is the first pledge of the Akaba.

Again the time of pilgrimage came round, and again Muhammad repaired to the glen of the mountain-road. Mus'ab had told him the good tidings of the spread of the faith at Yethrib, and he was met at the rendezvous by more than seventy men. They came by twos and threes

secretly for fear of the Koreish Muhammad recited to them verses from the Koran, and in answer to their invitation that he should come to them, and their profession that their lives were at his service, he asked them to pledge themselves to defend him as they would their own wives and children And a murmur of eager assent rolled round about from the seventy, and an old man, one of their chiefs, stood forth and said, 'Stretch out thy hand, O Muhammad' And the chief struck his own hand into Muhammad's palm in the frank Bedaway fashion, and thus pledged his fealty Man after man the others followed and struck their palms upon Muhammad's Then he chose twelve of them as leaders over the rest, saying, "Moses chose from among his people twelve leaders Ye shall be the sureties for the rest, even as the apostles of Jesus were, and I am the surety for my people" The voice of some stranger was heard nearby, and the assembly hastily dispersed and stole back to their camp This is the second pledge of the Akaba

The Kureish knew that some meeting had taken place, and though they could not bring home the offence to any of the Yethrib pilgrims, they kept a stricter watch on the movements of Muhammad and his friends after the pilgrims had returned homeward It was clear that Mecca was no longer a safe place for the Muslims, and a few

days after the second pledge Muhammad told his followers to betaked themselves secretly to Yethrib For two months at the beginning of the eleventh year of the mission (622) the Muslims were leaving Mecca in small companies to make the journey of 250 miles to Yethrib One hundred families had gone, and whole quarters of the city were deserted, left with empty houses and locked doors, "a prey to woe and wind" There were but three believers now remaining in Mecca—these were Muhammad, Abu-Bekr and Ali Like the captain of a sinking ship, the Prophet would not leave till all the crew were safe But now they were all gone save his two early friends, and everything was ready for the journey, still the Prophet did not go The Koreish who had been too much taken by surprise to prevent the emigration, now prepared measures for a summary vengeance on the disturber of their peace and the emptier of their city They set a watch on his house, and, it is said, commissioned a band of armed youths of different families to assassinate him, that the blood recompense might not fall on one household alone But Muhammad had warning of his danger, and leaving Ali to beguile the enemy, he was concealed with Abu-Bekr in a narrow-mouthed cave on Mount Thor, an hour-and-a-half's journey from Mecca, before the Koreish knew of his escape For three days they remained hidden there, while their enemies were

searching the country for them. Once they were very near, and Abu-Bekr trembled —“ We are but two ” “ Nay,” answered Muhammad, “ we are three, for God is with us ” And a spider, they say, wove its web over the entrance of the cave, so that the Kureish passed on, thinking that no man had entered there

On the third night the pursuit had been almost given over, and the two fugitives took up their journey again. Mounted on camels they journeyed to Yethrib. In eight days they reached the outskirts of the city (September A D 622) Muhammad was received with acclamation, and took up his residence among his kindred. The seat of Islam was transferred from Mecca to Yethrib, henceforward to be known as Medina, *Medinet-en-Neby*, “ the city of the Prophet ”

This is the Hijrah, or Flight of Muhammad from which the Muslims date their history. Their first year began on the 16th day of June of the year of Grace 622

A great change now comes over the Prophet's life. He is still the same man, but his surroundings are totally different, the work to be done is on a wider, rougher stage. Thus far we have seen a gentle, thoughtful boy, tending the sheep round Mecca,—a young man of little note, of whom the people only know that he was pure and upright and true,—then a man of forty

whose solitary communion with his soul has pressed him to the last terrible questions that each man, if he will think at all, must sometime ask himself—What is life? What does this world mean? What is reality, what is truth? Long months, years perhaps, we know not how long and weary, filled with the tortures of doubt and the despair of ever attaining to the truth, filled with the dreary thought of his aloneness in the relentless universe, and the longing to end it all, brought at last their fruits—sure conviction of the great secret of life, a firm belief in the Creator in whom all things live and move and have their being, Whom to serve is man's highest duty and privilege, the one thing to be done. And then ten years of struggling with careless, unthinking idolators, ten years of slow results, the gaining over of a few close friends, the devoted attachment of some slaves and men of the meaner rank, finally, the conversion of half a dozen great citizen chiefs, ending in the flight of the whole brotherhood of believers from their native city and their welcome to a town of strangers, where the faith had appealed to the hearts of perhaps two hundred citizens. It was but little that was done, so many years of toil, of indomitable courage and perseverance and long-suffering, and only a few hundred converts at the end! But it was the seed of a great harvest, Muhammad had shown

men what he was, the nobility of his character, his strong friendship, his endurance and courage, above all his earnestness and fiery enthusiasm for the truth he came to preach,—these things had revealed the hero, the master whom it was alike impossible to disobey and impossible not to love. Henceforward it is only a question of time. As the men of Medina came to know Muhammad they too will devote themselves to him body and soul, and the enthusiasm will catch fire and spread among the tribes till all Arabia is at the feet of the Prophet of the one God. ‘No emperor with his tiaras was obeyed as this man in a cloak of his own clouting,’ says Carlyle. He had the gift of influencing men, and he had the nobility only to influence them for good.

We have now to see Muhammad as king. Though he came as a fugitive, rejected as an impostor by his own citizens, yet it was not long before his word was supreme in his adopted city. He had to rule over a mixed and divided people, and this must have helped him to the supreme voice. There were four distinct parties at Medina. First, the “Refugees” (Mahajirîn), who had fled from Mecca, on these Muhammad could always rely with implicit faith. But he attached equal importance to the early converts of Medina, who had invited him among them and given him a home when the future seemed very hopeless.

before him and who were thenceforward known by the honourable title of the Helpers (Ansar) How devoted was the affection of these men is shown by the well-known scene at El-Jiraneh, when some Helpers were discontented with their share of the spoils, and Muhammad answered "Why are ye disturbed in mind because of the things of this life wherewith I have sought to console the hearts of these homeless refugees from Mecca whereas ye are already steadfast in the faith? Are ye not satisfied that others should obtain the flocks and the camels while ye carry back the Prophet of the Lord unto your homes? Nay I will not leave you for ever If all mankind went one way, and the men of Medina went another way, verily I would go the way of the men of Medina The Lord be favourable unto them, and bless them, and their sons, and their sons sons, for ever ! " And the "Helpers" wept upon their beards, and cried with one voice, "Yea, we are well satisfied, O Prophet, with our lot "

To retain the allegiance of the Refugees and the Helpers was never a trouble to Muhammad, the only difficulty was to rein in their zeal and hold them back from doing things of blood and vengeance on the enemies of Islam To cement friendship between the Refugees and the Helpers, Muhammad assigned each Refugee to one of the Ansar to be his brother The Helpers welcomed

the Refugees into their homes and gladly shared with them all their belongings. The third party in Medina was that of the 'Hypocrites' (Munafikin). This was composed of men who had only given nominal allegiance to Muhammad and his religion, but were always ready to turn about if they thought there was a chance of his overthrow. Muhammad treated these men and their leader Abdullah-ibn-Ubbayy (who himself aspired to the sovereignty of Medina) with patient courtesy and friendliness, and, though they actually deserted him more than once at vitally critical moments, he never retaliated, even when he was strong enough to crush them, but rather sought to win them over heartily to his cause by treating them as though they were what he would have them be. The result was that this party gradually diminished and became absorbed in the general mass of earnest Muslims, and though up to its leader's death it constantly called forth Muhammad's powers of conciliation, it finally vanished from the history of parties.

The fourth party was the real thorn in the Prophet's side. It consisted of the Jews, of whom three tribes were settled in the suburbs of Medina. In spite of Muhammad's efforts to conciliate them by allowing them the fullest freedom to follow their religion, they set themselves to oppose Islam, ridicule it, and vex its Preacher in every way that

their notorious ingenuity could devise

The step was false, the Jews missed their game, and they had to pay for it. The religion of Muhammad lost little, we may be sure, by the standing aloof of the Arabian Jews, but the Jews themselves lost much. Muhammad, indeed, treated them kindly so long as kindness was possible. He made a treaty with them, whereby the rights of the Muslims and the Jews were defined. They were to practise their respective religions unmolested, protection and security were promised to all the parties to the treaty, without distinction of creed, each was to help the other if attacked, no alliance was to be made with the Koreish, war was to be made in common, and no war could be made without the consent of Muhammad, crime alone could do away with the protection of the treaty.

But the Jews could not content themselves with standing aloof, they must needs act on the offensive. Not content with tormenting Muhammad with questions on that Torah which they were always wrangling about themselves, they took hold of the everyday formulas of Islam, the daily prayers and ejaculations, and, "twisting their tongues" mispronounced them so that they meant something absurd or blasphemous. When asked which they preferred, Islam or idolatry, they frankly avowed that they preferred idolatry. To lie about their own religion and to ridicule an-

other religion that was doing a great and good work around them was not enough for these Jews, they must set their poets to work to lampoon the women of the believers in obscene verse, and such outrages upon common decency, not to say upon the Arab honour and chivalry, became a favourite occupation among the poets of the Jewish clans

These were offences against the religion and the persons of the Muslims. They also conspired against the State. Muhammad was not only the preacher of Islam, he was also the king of Medina and was responsible for the safety and peace of the city. As a Prophet, he could afford to ignore the jibes of the Jews, but as the chief of the city, the general in a time of almost continual warfare, when Medina was kept in a state of military defence and under a sort of military discipline, he could not overlook treachery. He was bound by his duty to his subjects to suppress a party that might (and nearly did) lead to the sack of the city by investing armies. The measures he took for this object have furnished his European biographer's with a handle for attack.

Of the sentences upon the three whole clans, that of exile, passed on two of them, was clement enough. They were a turbulent set, always setting the people of Medina by the ears, and finally a brawl followed by an insurrection resulted in the expulsion of one tribe, and insubordination,

alliance with enemies, and a suspicion of conspiracy against the Prophet's life, ended similarly for the second. Both tribes had violated the original treaty and had endeavoured in every way to bring Muhammad and his religion to ridicule and destruction. The only question is whether their punishment was not too light. Of the third clan a fearful example was made, not by Muhammad, but by an arbiter appointed by themselves. It was a harsh sentence, but it must be remembered that the crime of these men was high treason against the State, during time of siege, and those who have read how Wellington's march could be traced by the bodies of deserters and pillagers hanging from the trees, need not be surprised at the summary execution of a traitorous clan.

Whilst Muhammad's supremacy was being established and maintained among the mixed population of Medina, a vigorous warfare was being carried on outside with his old persecutors, the Koreish. On the history of this war I need not dwell, its leading features were the two battles of Bedr and Ohud, in the first of which three hundred and thirteen Muslims, though outnumbered at the odds of three to one, were completely victorious (A D 524 A H 2), whilst at Ohud, being outnumbered in the like proportion and deserted by the party of the "Hypocrites," they were almost defeated (A H 3). Two years

later the Koreish, gathering together their allies, advanced upon Medina and besieged it for fifteen days, but the foresight of Muhammad in digging a trench, and the enthusiasm of the Muslims in defending it, resisted all assaults, and the coming of the heavy storms for which the climate of Medina is noted drove the enemy back to Mecca. The next year (A.H. 6) a ten-year truce was concluded with the Koreish, in pursuance of which a strange scene took place in the following spring. It was agreed that Muhammad and his people should perform the Lesser Pilgrimage, and that the Koreish should for that purpose vacate Mecca for three days. Accordingly, in March 629, about two thousand Muslims, with Muhammad at their head on his famous camel El-Kaswa—the same on which he had fled from Mecca—trooped down the valley and performed the rites which every Muslim to this day observes.

Says Sir William Muir (in his "Life of Mohammad") "It was surely a strange sight which at this time presented itself in the vale of Mecca,—a sight unique in the history of the world. The ancient city is for three days evacuated by all its inhabitants, high and low, every house deserted, and, as they retire, the exiled converts, many years banished from their birth-place, approach in a great body, accompanied by their allies, revisit the empty homes of their childhood,

and within the short allotted space fulfil the rites of pilgrimage. The ousted inhabitants, climbing the heights around, take refuge under tents or other shelter among the hills and glens, and clustering on the overhanging peak of Abu-Kubeys, thence watch the movements of the visitors beneath, as with the Prophet at their head—they make the circuit of the Kaaba and the rapid procession between Es-Safa and Marwa, and anxiously scan every figure if perchance they may recognise among the worshippers some long-lost friend or relative. It was a scene rendered possible only by the throes which gave birth to Islam."

When the three days were over, Muhammad and his party peaceably returned to Medina, and the Meccans re-entered their homes. But this pilgrimage, and the self-restraint of the Muslims therein, advanced the cause of Islam among its enemies. Converts increased daily, and some leading men of the Koreish now went over to Muhammad. The clans around were sending in their deputations of homage. But the final keystone was set in the eighth year of the Flight (A D 630), when a body of Koreish broke the truce by attacking an ally of the Muslims, and Muhammad forthwith marched upon Mecca with ten thousand men, and the city despairing of defence, surrendered. Now was the time for the Prophet to show his blood-thirsty nature. His old persecutors are at his feet.

Will he not trample on them, torture them, revenge himself after his own cruel manner? Now the man will come forward in his true colours we may prepare our horror, and cry shame beforehand

But what is this? Is there no blood in the streets? Where are the bodies of the thousands that have been butchered? Facts are hard things, and it is a fact that the day of Muhammad's greatest triumph over his enemies was also the day of his grandest victory over himself. He freely forgave the Koreish all the years of sorrow and cruel scorn they had inflicted on him. He gave an amnesty to the whole population of Mecca. Four criminals, whom justice condemned made up Muhammad's proscription list when he entered as a conqueror of the city of his bitterest enemies. The army followed his example, and entered quietly and peaceably, no house was robbed, no woman insulted. One thing alone suffered destruction. Going to the Kaaba, Muhammad stood before each of the three hundred and sixty idols and pointed to it with his staff saying, "Truth is come and falsehood is fled away", and at these words his attendants hewed it down, and all the idols and household gods of Mecca and round about were destroyed.

It was thus that Muhammad entered his native city. Through all the annals of conquest,

there is no triumphant entry like this

The taking of Mecca was soon followed by adhesion of all Arabia. Every reader knows the story of the spread of Islam. The tribes of every part of the peninsula sent embassies to do homage to the Prophet. Arabia was not enough; the Prophet had written in his bold uncompromising way to the great kings of the East, to the Persian Khusru, and the Greek Emperor, and they little knew how soon his invitation to the faith would be repeated, and how quickly Islam would be knocking at their doors with no faltering hand.

The Prophet's career was near its end. In the tenth year of the Flight, twenty-two years after he had first felt the spirit move him to preach to his people, he resolved once more to leave his adopted city and go to Mecca to perform a farewell pilgrimage. And when the rites were done in the valley of Mina, the Prophet spoke unto the multitude—the forty thousand pilgrims—with solemn last words.

“Ye people! Hearken to my words, for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you here again.

“Your Lives and your Property are sacred and inviolable amongst one another until the end of time.

“The Lord hath ordained to every man the share of his inheritance. a Testament is not lawful

to the prejudice of heirs

“The child belongeth to the parent and the violator of wedlock shall be punished Ye people! ye have rights demandable of your wives, and they have rights demandable of you Treat your women well ”

“And your slaves, see that you feed them with such food as ye eat yourselves, and clothe them with the stuff ye wear And if they commit a fault which ye are not willing to forgive, then sell them, for they are the servants of the Lord, and are not to be tormented Ye people! Harken unto my speech and comprehend it Know that every Muslim is the brother of every other Muslim All of you are on the same equality ye are one brotherhood ”

Then looking up to heaven, he cried, ‘O Lord! I have delivered my message and fulfilled my mission ” And all the multitude answered, “Ye, verily hast thou! ”—“O Lord! I beseech Thee, bear Thou witness to it,” and, like Moses, he lifted up his hands and blessed the people

Three months more and Mohammad was dead
A H 11 June, 632

It is a hard thing to form a calm estimate of the Dreamer of the Desert There is something so tender and womanly, and withal so heroic, about the man, that one is in peril of finding the judgment unconsciously blinded by the feeling of

reverence and well-nigh love that such a nature inspires. He who, standing alone braved for years the hatred of his people is the same who was never the first to withdraw his hand from another's clasp, the beloved of children who never passed a group of little ones without a smile from his wonderful eyes and kind word for them sounding all the kinder in that sweet-toned voice. The frank friendship the noble generosity the dauntless courage and hope of the man all tend to melt criticism in admiration.

In telling in brief outline the story of Mohammad's life I have endeavoured to avoid controversial points. I have tried to convey in the simplest manner the view of that life which a study of the authorities must force upon every unbiased mind. Many of the events of Mohammad's life have been distorted and credited with ignoble motives by European biographers, but on the facts they mainly agree and these I have narrated without encumbering them with the ingenious adumbrations of their learned recorders. But there are some things in the Prophet's life which have given rise to charges too weighty to be dismissed without discussion. He has been accused of cruelty sensuality, and insincerity, he has been called a blood-thirsty tyrant, a voluptuary, and an impostor !

The charge of cruelty scarcely deserves con-

sideration I have already spoken of the punishment of the Jews which forms the grounds of the accusation One has but to refer to Mohammad's kindness to the prisoners after the battle of Bedr, to his patient tolerance towards his enemies at Medina, his gentleness his love of children and the dumb creation and above all his bloodless entry into Mecca and the complete amnesty he gave to those who had been his bitter enemies during eighteen years of insult and persecution and finally open war to show that cruelty was no part of Mohammad's nature

To say that Mohammad or any other Arab, was sensual in a higher degree than an ordinary European is simply to announce a well-worn axiom the passions of the men of the sunland are not as those of the chill north But to say that Mohammad was a voluptuary is false The simple austerity of his daily life to the very last, his hard mat for sleeping on, his plain food, his self-imposed menial work, point him out as an ascetic rather than a voluptuary in most senses of the word Two things he loved, perfume and women, the first was harmless enough, and the special case of his wives has its special answer A great deal too much has been said about these wives It is a melancholy spectacle to see professedly Christian biographers gloating over the stories and fables of Mohammad's domestic relations like the writers

and readers of "society journals" Several of these marriages must have been entered into from the feeling that those women whose husbands had fallen in battle for the faith, and who had thus been left unprotected, had a claim upon the generosity of him who prompted the fight Other marriages were contracted from motives of policy, in order to conciliate the heads of rival factions Perhaps the strongest reason—one of which it is impossible to over-estimate the force—was a natural wish that he should have a son who should follow in his steps and carry on his work, but the wish was never gratified, Mohammad's sons died young

After all, the overwhelming argument is his fidelity to his first wife When he was little more than a boy he married Khadija who was fifteen years older than himself, with all the added age which women gain so quickly in the East For five and twenty years Mohammad remained faithful to his elderly wife, and when she was sixty-five, and they might have celebrated their 'silver wedding', he was as devoted to her as when first he married her During all those years there was never a breath of scandal Thus far Mohammad's life bears microscopic scrutiny Then Khadija died, and though he married several women afterwards, he never forgot his old wife, and loved her best to the end "When I was poor she enriched me, when they called me a liar she alone believed in

me, when all the world was against me she alone remained true " This loving, tender memory of an old wife laid in the grave belongs only to a noble nature it is not to be looked for in a voluptuary

His whole life is one long argument for his loyalty to truth He had but one answer for his worshippers 'I am no more than a man, I am only human' 'Do none enter Paradise save by the mercy of God?' asked Aisha 'None, none none,' he answered, 'Not even thou by thy own merits?' "Neither shall I enter Paradise unless God cover me with His mercy" He was a man like unto his brethren in all things save one, and that one difference served only to increase his humbleness, and render him the more sensitive to his shortcomings He was sublimely confident of this single attribute, that he was the messenger of the Lord of the Worlds, and that the words he spoke came verily from Him He was fully persuaded—and no men dare dispute his right to the belief—that God had sent him to do a great work amongst his people in Arabia

Surely the character of Mohammad has been misjudged He was not the ambitious schemer some would have him, still less the hypocrite and sham prophet others have imagined He was an enthusiast in that noblest sense when enthusiasm becomes the salt of the earth the one thing that keeps men from rotting while they live Enthu-

siasm is often used spitefully, because it is joined to an unworthy cause, or falls upon barren ground and bears no fruit. So was it not with Mohammad. He was an enthusiast when enthusiasm was the one thing needed to set the world aflame, and his enthusiasm was noble for a noble cause. He was one of those happy few who have attained the supreme joy of making one great truth their very life-spring. He was the messenger of the One God, and never to his life's end did he forget who he was or the message which was the marrow of his being. He brought his tidings to his people with a great dignity, sprung from the consciousness of his high office, together with a most sweet humility, whose roots lay in the knowledge of his own weakness. Well did Carlyle choose him for his Prophet-hero. Verily, no man was ever more thoroughly filled with the sense of his mission or carried out that mission more heroically.

Islam

By Stanley Lane-Poole

Many have sought to answer the questions—Why was the triumph of Islam so speedy and so complete? Why have so many millions embraced the religion of Mohammad, and scarcely a hundred ever recanted? Why do a thousand Christians become Muslims to one Muslim who adopts Christianity? Why do hundreds of millions of human beings still cling to the faith of Islam? Some have attempted to explain the first overwhelming success of the Mohammadan religion by the argument of the sword. They forget Carlyle's laconic reply, "First get your sword." You must win men's hearts before you can induce them to peril their lives for you, and the first conquerors of Islam must have been made Muslims before they were made 'fighters on the path of God'."

Decidedly Islam itself was the main cause of its triumph. By some strange intuition Mohammad succeeded in finding the one form of monotheism that has ever commended itself to any wide section of the Eastern world. Christianity has never

gained a firm hold upon the East Islam not only was at once accepted (partly in earnest partly in name, but accepted) by Arabia Syria, Persia, Egypt Northern Africa and Spain at its first outburst, but, with the exception of Spain, it has never lost its vantage-ground it has seen no country that has once embraced its doctrine turn to another faith it has added great multitudes in India and China and Turkestan to its subjects, and in quite recent times it has been spreading in wide and swiftly-following waves over Africa, and has left but a small part of that vast continent unconverted to its creed There must be something in the religion to explain its persistence and increase, and to account for its present hold over so large a portion of the dwellers on the earth

Men trained in European ideas of religion have always found a difficulty in understanding the fascination which the Muslim faith has for so many minds in the East 'There is no God but God and Mohammad is His Prophet' There is nothing in this, they say, to move the heart Yet this creed has stirred an enthusiasm that has never been surpassed Islam has its martyrs, its recluses, who have renounced all that life offered, and have accepted death with a smile for the sake of the faith that was in them It is idle to say that the eternity of happiness will explain this

The truest martyrs of Islam as of Christianity did not die to gain paradise And if they did, the belief in the promises of the creed must follow the hearty acceptance of the religion Islam must have possessed a power of seizing men's belief before it could have inspired them with such a love of its paradise

Mohammad's conception of God has I think, been misunderstood and its effect upon the people consequently under-estimated Mohammad conceived of God as the semitic mind has always preferred to think of Him his God is the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing the All-Just Irresistible Power is the first attribute he thinks of the Lord of the Worlds the Author of the Heavens and the Earth Who hath created Life and Death in Whose hand is Dominion, Who maketh the Dawn to appear and causeth the Night to cover the Day the Great, All-Powerful Lord of the glorious Throne the Thunder proclaimeth His perfection the whole earth is His handful and the Heavens shall be folded together in His right hand And with the power he conceives the Knowledge that directs it to right ends God is the Wise the Just, the True the Swift in Reckoning, Who knoweth every ant's weight of good and of ill that each man hath done, and Who suffereth not the reward of the faithful to perish

"God! There is no god but He, the Living,

the Steadfast ! Slumber seizeth Him not, nor sleep Whatsoever is in the Heavens, and whatsoever is in the Earth, is His Who is there that shall plead with Him save by His leave ? He knoweth what was before and what shall come after, and they compass not ought of His knowledge, but what He willeth His Throne overspreadeth the Heavens and the Earth, and the keeping of both is no burden to Him, and He is the High, the Great —Koran, 11, 256

But with this power there is also the gentleness that belongs only to great strength God is the Guardian over His servants, the Shelterer of the orphan, the Guider of the erring, the Deliverer from every affliction, in His hand is Good, and He is the Generous Lord, the Gracious, the Hearer, the Near at-Hand Each Sura of the Koran begins with the words, 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful,' and Mohammad was never tired of telling the people how God was very Forgiving, that His love for man was more tender than the mother-bird's for her young

The doctrine of one Supreme God, to Whose will it is the duty of every man to surrender himself, is the kernel of Islam, the truth for which Mohammad lived and suffered and triumphed But it was no new teaching, as he himself was constantly saying His was only the last of revelations Many prophets—Abraham, Moses, and

Christ—had taught the same faith before, but people had hearkened little to their words. So Mohammad was sent, not different from them, a simple messenger, yet the last and greatest of them, the ‘ seal of prophecy ’, the ‘ most excellent of the creation of God ’ This is the second dogma of Islam “‘Mohammad is the apostle of God’ It is well worthy of notice that it is not said, “Mohammad is the only apostle of God’ Islam is more tolerant in this matter than other religions Its Prophet is not the sole commissioner of the Most High, nor is his teaching the only true teaching the world has ever received Many other messengers had been sent by God to guide men to the right, and these taught the same religion that was in the mouth of the preacher of Islam Hence Muslims reverence Moses and Christ only next to Mohammad All they claim for their founder is that he was the last and the best of the messengers of the one God

Islam lies more in doing than in believing That ‘ faith without works is dead ’ is a doctrine which everyday’s routine must bring home to the mind of the devout Muslim The practical duties of the Mohammadan religion, beyond the actual profession of faith, are the performance of prayer, giving alms, keeping the fast, and accomplishing the pilgrimage

Prayers form no light part of the religious

duties of the Muslim, especially since they involve careful preparatory ablutions, for Mohammad impressed upon his followers the salutary doctrine that cleanliness is an essential part of Godliness, and the scrupulous cleanliness of the Mohamadans which contrasts so favourably with the unsavoury state of Easterns of other creeds is an excellent feature in the practical influence of Islam. There is plenty of real fervour in the prayers of the Mosque, and they are joined in by the worshippers with an earnest attention which shames the listless sleeping bearing of most congregations in England. Mohammad frequently enjoins private prayer at home, and especially praises him who "passes his night worshipping God."

Almsgiving was originally compulsory, and the tax was collected by the officers of the Caliph, but now the Muslim is merely expected to give voluntarily about a fortieth part of his income in charity each year. The great fast of Ramadhan is too well known to need more than a passing mention here, but it is not so well-known that Mohammad, ascetic as he was himself in this as in many other matters, whilst he ordained the month of fasting for the chastening of his able-bodied followers, was a determined enemy to useless mortification of the flesh, and boldly affirmed that God took no pleasure in a man's wantonly

injuring himself, hence if one that was weakly and sick, could not keep the fast without bodily detriment, he was to omit it. And the same wise leniency was shown by the Arab Prophet in respect of prayer, which may be curtailed or omitted in certain cases,—and with regard to the pilgrimage, which no one was to perform to his hurt.

It would take too much space to look closely into the lesser duties of Islam, many of which suggest exceedingly wholesome lessons to Western civilisation. But we must not pass over one of these minor duties, for it reflects the highest credit upon the founder and the professors of Mohammadanism—I mean the humane treatment of animals.

Revd Bosworth Smith in his book, “Mohammad and Mohammadanism”, writes

“There is no religion which has taken a higher view in its authoritative documents of animal life, and none wherein the precept has been so much honoured by his practical observance. “There is no beast on earth,” says the Koran, “nor bird which flieth with its wings, but the same is a people like unto you—unto the Lord shall they return”, and it is the current belief that animals will share with men the general resurrection, and be judged according to their works. There has been no Oriental ‘Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals’. But one reason

of this is not far to seek What the legislation of the last few years has at length attempted to do, and, from the mere fact that it is legislation, must do ineffectually, has been long effected in the East by the moral and religious sentiment which, like almost everything that is good in that part of the world can be traced back, in part at least, to the great Prophet of Arabia In the East, so far as it has not been hardened by the West, there is a real sympathy between man and the domestic animals they understand one another, and the cruelties which the most humane of our countrymen unconsciously inflict in the habitual use, for instance, of the muzzle or the bearing-rein on the most docile the most patient, the most faithful, and the most intelligent of their companions are impossible in the East An Arab *cannot* ill-treat his horse and Mr Lane bears emphatic testimony to the fact that in his long residence in Egypt he never saw an ass or a dog treated with cruelty, except in those cities which were overrun by Europeans "

There are some very beautiful traditions of the Prophet, showing the tenderness with which he always treated animals and which he ever enjoined on his people A man once came to him with a carpet and said, " O Prophet, I passed through a wood and heard the voices of the young of birds, and I took and put them into my carpet,

and their mother came fluttering round my head ' And the Prophet said ' Put them down," and when he had put them down the mother joined the young And the Prophet said " Do you wonder at the affection of the mother towards her young? I swear by Him who has sent me verily God is more loving to his servants than the mother to these young birds Return them to the place from which ye took them and let their mother be with them " ' Fear God with regard to animals," said Mohammad, ' ride them when they are fit to be ridden and get off when they are tired Verily there are rewards for our doing good to dumb animals and giving them water to drink "

Such in brief is the religion of Mohammad It is a form of pure theism, simpler and more austere than the theism of most forms of modern Christianity, lofty in its conception of the relation of man to God, and noble in its doctrine of the duty of man to man, and of man to the lower creation There is little in it of superstition less of complexity of dogmas it is an exacting religion, without the repulsiveness of asceticism, severe, but not merciless

This religion is Islam as understood and taught by its Prophet, so far as we can gather it from the Koran, aided by those traditions which seem to have the stamp of authenticity As a

religion Islam is great , it has taught men to worship one God with a pure worship who formerly worshipped many gods impurely Neither the Sufism of Persia nor the sensational religion of the dervishes of Turkey conform to this ancient Islam to which perhaps a modification of Wahhaby puritanism would be the nearest approach The original faith of Mohammad has not gained by its development in foreign lands and alien minds, and perhaps the best we can hope for modern Islam is that it may try the experiment of retrogression and seek to regain the simplicity of the old form without losing the advantages (if there be any) which it has acquired from contact with Western civilisation

Eloquent testimony about the beneficial influence of Islam in our own day is borne by Dr E Blyden, in his book "The People of Africa" He is an able observer, whose African birth and training qualify him in a high degree for properly understanding the true state of his countrymen, whilst his Christian profession serves as a guarantee against excessive prejudice in favour of Islam This is what he says

'All careful and candid observers agree that the influence of Islam in Central and West Africa has been, upon the whole, of a most salutary character It has inculcated habits of moderation and temperance over the whole of the vast region

covered by its emissaries , and so great is the influence of its teaching, that where there are Muslim inhabitants, even in pagan towns, it is a very rare thing to see a person intoxicated The Moham-madan converts drink nothing but water From Senegal of Lagos, over two thousand miles, there is scarcely an important town on the seaboard where there is not at least one mosque and active representatives of Islam, side by side with the Christian teacher And as soon as a pagan, however, obscure or degraded, embraces the Muslim faith, he is at once admitted as an equal to the society

‘ The pagan village possessing a Muslim teacher is always found to be in advance of its neighbours in all the elements of civilisation The introduction of Islam into Central and West Africa has been the most important, if not the sole, preservative against the desolations of slave trade Mohammadanism furnished a protection to the tribe who embraced it, by effectually binding them together in one strong religious fraternity, and enabling them by their united efforts to baffle the attempts of powerful slave-hunters Enjoying this comparative immunity from sudden hostile incursion, industry was stimulated among them , industry diminished their poverty, and as they increased in worldly substance, they also increased in desire for knowledge Receiving a desire for literature by a study of the Arabic lang-

uage, they acquired loftier views, wider tastes, and those energetic habits which so pleasingly distinguish them from their pagan neighbours. Students often travel on foot from the West Coast right across Africa to study at the great mosque of the Azhar University in Cairo.

It must be remembered that these results were observed in the very centre of African Christianity in Sierra Leone and other coast settlements. It is said that in Sierra Leone three-fourths of the Muslim population were not born Muslims, but were converted from Christianity or paganism and this although "all liberated Africans are always handed over to Christian missionaries for instruction, and their children are baptized and brought up at the public expense in Christian Schools and are thus, in a sense, ready-made Christians.

These facts show that even in the present-day, and with the competition of Christian missionary societies Islam may be a power for good in poor communities—that it can not only give them a pure instead of a degraded faith but can raise them socially and intellectually. The effects of a simple form of Islam on these African converts may give one some notion of its influence on its hearers in the early days, before the theologians had corrupted it.

Muhammad's theology is confined to the unity of God, whose power he seeks to illustrate by the

recital of the marvels of nature, and whose justice will be vindicated at a great day of reckoning We hear nothing but a voice crying in the wilderness the words of the Prophet of old—"Hear, O Israel! The Lord your God is one Lord"

The ritual of the Koran includes the necessary acts of faith—the recital of the creed prayer, almsgiving fasting, and pilgrimage "Seek aid from patience and from prayer ' God pardons everything but associating ought with Him " "Eat ye of the good things wherewith We have provided you, and give thanks to God ' Further, the believers are forbidden to drink wine, to make statues, and play at games of chance Usury is strictly prohibited, and classed among the great sins "Repel evil with what is better "

The laws affecting women are indeed the most minute and the most considerate in the Koran It was here that Muhammad made his principal reforms, and though to a European these reforms may seem slight, in contrast with the previous condition of Arab women they were considerable The restrictions of polygamy and recommendation of monogamy, the institution of prohibited degrees against the horrible laxity of Arabian marriages, the limitations of divorce, and stringent rules as to the support of divorced women during a certain period by their former husbands and as to the maintenance of children, the innovation of creating

women heirs at law, the abolition of the custom which treated a man's widow as a part of his hereditary chattels, form a considerable list of removed disabilities

Muhammad goes on to advise reconciliation between husbands and wives by means of arbiters chosen by the two disputants, and frequently counsels kindness to wives and it is a fact that no profound legislator ever made such important changes in favour of women as did Muhammad. The raising of women to the position of heirs is not the only innovation that Muhammad made in the law of inheritance. It may almost be said that he took away the power of testamentary disposition. The just share of each relative is appointed, and the testator has only the power of disposing as he pleases with one-third of his property. One ordinance as to wills deserves to be mentioned: a man is required to provide a year's maintenance for his widows, that they need not be compelled to leave their homes. The main peculiarity of inheritance is the definite institution of an hereditary reserve of two-thirds, which the testator cannot touch, and which devolves upon certain regular heirs (including widows), or in default upon the State. The system undoubtedly has its merits, and it has been not seldom extolled above the European principle of free disposition, as the wide diffusion of property which it involves pre-

vents the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few wealthy persons

The Koran preaches a simple and easy religion free from ambiguities. One may turn the pages of the Koran backwards and forwards for a lifetime before one finds the smallest indication of the formidable system of ritual which is now considered an essential part of the Mohammadan religion. For ourselves we prefer the Koran to the religion as it is now practised, and are glad to think that we do not owe the faults of modern Islam to the sacred book on which it is supposed to rest. There is a peculiar simplicity about the Koran which attracts one in spite of its repetitions. No book bears more distinctly the impress of its author's mind of none can it be so positively asserted that it was spoken from the heart without thought or care. The book has a personality in it which chains the attention. It is not a code of law, nor yet a theological system, but it is something better than these. It is the broken utterance of a human heart wholly incapable of disguise, and the heart was that of a man who has influenced the world as only one other has ever moved it.

Extracts from the Holy Quran

Religion

They were not commanded anything but to worship God with sincere faith in Him, leaving all other gods and to keep up prayer, and pay the alms And that is the true religion

Preachers

Let there be among you a body of persons who should invite towards what is good, and enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil, and they shall be blessed

Ye are the best people that hath been raised up unto mankind ye enjoin justice and ye forbid wrong, and ye believe in God

Toleration

There is no compulsion in religion Now is the path of virtue made distinct from error Whoever, therefore shall deny the devil and believe in God, he will have taken hold of a strong handle which shall never break

Equality of men

O men, verily We have created you of a male and a female, and We have divided you into nations and tribes that you may be able to identify each other Verily, of you the most honourable in the sight of God, is he, who is the most virtuous of you Verily, God is Wise and Knowing And if God had pleased, He had surely made you all one people, but He would test you by what He hath given to each Therefore try to excel one another in good deeds To God you shall return, and He will then tell you concerning that in which you differed

Cleanliness

God loveth those who turn to Him, and loveth those who are clean

Knowledge

Say O Lord, increase my knowledge

Kindness to Animals

There is no beast on earth, nor bird which flieth with its wings, but the same is a people like unto you—unto the Lord shall they return

The Married Life

God has created you men and women and

put love and tenderness between you, so that ye may find consolation from each other

Selfless Souls

They are the blest who, though longing for it themselves, bestow their food on the poor and the orphan and the captive (saying) 'We feed you for the sake of God' we seek from you neither recompense nor thanks

Hoarding

Those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in God's way, announce to them a painful chastisement (from God)

Wine and Gaming

They will ask thee about wine and games of chance, say, in them both is sin and profit to men, but the sin of both is greater than the profit of the same

Usury

And what ye put out to usury that it may increase with the wealth of men it shall not increase with God, but what ye put out in alms, desiring the face of God—these it is who shall gain double

Ill-treatment of Orphans

Verily those who devour the property of

orphans unjustly, only devour into their bellies fire

And draw not nigh unto the wealth of the orphans save so as to better it, until he reaches full age, and give weight and measure with justice

Prayer

Be ye then steadfast to prayer, and give alms, and hold fast by God, He is your sovereign, and an excellent sovereign, and an excellent help !

Alms-giving

Ye cannot attain to righteousness until ye expend in alms of what ye love What ye expend in alms, that God knows

Kind speech and pardon are better than alms-giving, followed by annoyance, and God, is rich and clement

Sayings of Prophet Muhammad

Instructions to Governors whom he sent out to rule

They should be mild and lenient and not rude and rough. They should not provoke the antagonism of the people. If they should come across a people with a religion of their own, they should preach to them that God was one and that He revealed His will to mankind through His Prophet, and only after this was accepted, they should tell them that they were required to pray to God five times a day. The duty of giving Zakat (a prescribed portion of one's belonging to be given away in charity) should be impressed upon them next. The rich should pay the poor among them, but in this process, they should not be made to part with the best part of their property.

Toleration for other religions

The deputations received by the Prophet from various tribes were invariably housed by him in his mosque. The Jews and the Christians were allowed to offer their prayers in their own

manner in this mosque The duties of hospitality were shared by all the Mussalmans in turn

A Muslim should work and not beg

A man asked the Prophet for monetary help The Prophet told him to bring what he had The man brought a sheet of cloth and a wooden cup The Prophet sold these and with the proceeds bought a hatchet and a piece of rope and asked the man to cut wood in the jungle and live by selling it instead of begging which was hurtful to his self-respect

Equality before the Law

A woman of an influential tribe was convicted of theft A deputation waited on the Prophet recommending lenient treatment He replied that even if his own daughter had committed theft he would not have relaxed the law for her

Self help and democracy

Once, on a journey when his followers were cooking food the Prophet undertook to collect fuel, and as they offered to do it themselves he told them that in ordinary secular affairs he did not like to set himself up above them

Abuse of Parents

‘It is of the greatest of sins,’ said the Prophet, ‘to abuse one’s parents’ ‘Who abuses his

parents ?' he was asked 'He who abuses other's parents and so gets his parents abused in return,' he replied

Whom God loves

Verily God is pure and loves the pure, is cleanly and loves the cleanly, is beneficent and loves the beneficent, is generous and loves the generous

Education of children

No presents or gift of a parent out of all the gifts and presents to a child, is superior to a good liberal education

That a man gives a liberal education to his child is better for him than that he gives a large measure of corn in alms

The prophet set free some of the prisoners of war on the condition that they should teach the Mussalmans how to read and write

Wrong-doing

'Help thy brother, the wrong-doer and the wronged,' said the Prophet 'How shall we help the wrong-doer?' he was asked 'Hinder him from wrong-doing,' said the Prophet, 'and verily that is helping him'

Usury

The prophet cursed the taker of usury and

the giver of it, and the writer of it, and the witness to it, and said they were all equal

Servants

Your servants are your brothers and stewards
Feed them and clothe them like yourselves
Compel them not to do work too hard for them,
but if you so compel them then help them in
doing it

When your servant comes to you with food,
then unless you make him sit down to eat with
you, you should at least allow him to eat a
mouthful or two of it, for verily he bore the heat
and management of preparing it

Parents

The pleasure of God is in the pleasure of the
parents and the displeasure of God is in the
displeasure of parents

Mischief-making

Whoso is hurtful to others, God will be
hurtful to him for it, and whoso is troublesome to
others, God will put him into trouble for it

Shall I tell you about the best among you
and the worst among you? The best among you
is he from whom good is expected and from whose
evil men are secure, and the worst of you is he
from whom good is not expected and from whose
evil men are not secure

Believers' disposition

There are two qualities which do not occur together in a Momin (believer)—miserliness and bad disposition

Mercy

Mercy is an offshoot of the Merciful (God) Whoso shall come to it shall come upto God and whoso shall cut himself off from it God will cut him off (from Himself)

He is not of us who is not merciful to the younger people, nor honours the old among us

He who is devoid of kindness is devoid of all good

Humility

He who humbles himself for the sake of God, him will God exalt And he who is proud and haughty God will render him contemptible

Greetings

Shall I tell you of a thing which when ye do, ye will love one another? Extend greetings among yourselves

Forgiveness

Verily, it is better that the leader should err on the side of forgiveness than that he should err in punishing

Drinking

Drink no intoxicant, for verily, it is at the head of all filthy actions, and beware of sinning, for verily with sin alights the vengeance of God

Gratitude

He who is not thankful to men is not thankful to God

Prayer of the oppressed

Fear the prayer of the wronged for verily there is no veil between him and God

Visiting the sick

Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and free the captive When ye go to visit a sick person, cheer him up in his distress

Truth

Verily truth is goodness and goodness leads to paradise, and verily lying is wickedness and wickedness leads to hell

Trust

He has really no faith who fulfils not his trust, and he has really no religion who fulfils not his promise

Slandering

A faithful believer is not a slanderer, or a shameless and impudent talker

The best of God's servants are those who when seen remind of God, and the worst of God's servants are those who walk about with slander, dividing friends and seeking to put good men in trouble

Salutation

A Muslim should salute his wife and children on entering his house

When you go into houses salute the people thereof, and when you go out take leave of the people thereof by a salutation

Presents

Shake hand with each other all grudges shall go off from you, and make presents to each other this will increase love among you, and will take away the deepest hatred

Privacy

Whoever looks into the letter of his friend without his permission looks into fire (that is, commits sin)

A Muslim's conduct

Say not, if people do good to us, we will do good to them, and if people oppress us, we will oppress them, but resolve that if people do good to you, you will do good to them, and if they oppress you, you won't oppress them

Keep fast and eat also, stay awake at night (for religious exercises) and sleep also, because verily there is a duty on you to your body, not to labour overmuch so that you may not get ill, and verily there is a duty to your eyes, ye must sleep sometimes and give them rest, and verily there is a duty on you to your wife, and to your visitors and guests that come to see you, you must talk to them

Kindness to Animals

Fear God with regard to Animals, said Mohammad, ride them when are fit to be ridden, and get off when they are tired Verily there are rewards for our doing good to dumb animals, and giving them water to drink

Regard for animals

Once an Arab was urging his camel to go faster, but the camel being sick and heavily laden could not do so, whereupon the man began to whip it mercilessly Mohammad seeing this went to the Arab and said, "O brother! Be kind to your animal, it is old, sick and feeble" The Arab felt ashamed, stopped whipping and took the animal home slowly and softly

Mohammad once said to his friend Abubaker, "I am hurt to see people killing little birds"

Chivalry to women

Mohammad once passing through a street saw a man beating his wife and the onlookers enjoying the scene. The Prophet could not tolerate the sight and cried out: Do not beat a woman or degrade her in public. It is not chivalrous to beat a woman, and you are all chivalrous.

Helping poor debtors over the stile

Once an Arab owed some money to a Jew, who was demanding it and abusing the man. Mohammad seeing this went home, brought money and paid the debt. The Arab was astonished at the unexpected relief and began to praise the deliverer. But Mohammad only said to him, 'Never take a loan you cannot pay.'

Helping the aged

There was a land-owner who had an old servant to work on his land. The work pressed heavy on the aged person. Mohammad saw him once doing his work with trembling hands. At once his heart melted and he went to his help. The old man felt grateful for the relief. But Mohammad told him that he was always at the service of the aged person whenever and wherever he stood in need of any kind of assistance.

Taking up cudgels for the weak

Mohammad once saw the chief of a tribe whipping his maid servant along the road-side and

asked him to stop that cruel treatment of the helpless girl. The chief frowned and said, 'Nobody has a right to meddle with my affairs.' But the prophet very solemnly said, 'I must stand by a poor and helpless woman.'

Sympathy for the sick

Mohammad one day had to grind corn for a sick slave whom his master did not permit to rest. Mohammad did it cheerfully and told him to call upon him whenever he had any work which was beyond his power.

Compassion for orphan

A poor orphan in rags was being crushed under a heavy task set by his cruel master. Mohammad happening to see him felt pity for him and asked, 'Who are you and why you look so miserable?' The orphan said that he served a cruel master who never showed him any kindness. Mohammad helped the orphan. The next day Mohammad went there again and saw the child carrying a very heavy load. He at once stepped forward, took the load from the boy and carried it to the place of its destination. He then said to the boy, 'Think of Mohammad whenever you are in trouble.'

Mockery condemned

Once Mohammad saw an aged, blind woman tumble and fall in the streets of Mecca. People

laughed and amused themselves at her expense. Mohammad's heart was filled with compassion for her. He accompanied her to her house and kept on supplying meals to her everyday.

On another occasion Mohammad saved a poor helpless woman carrying a heavy load from the taunts and ridicule of people by taking them to task for their shameless conduct. He thus set a good example to the people of respecting women.

Respect for daughters

Whenever the Prophet's daughter Fatima came to see him, he always stood up to show respect for her, thus teaching people to respect their daughters.

Leaders

The leader of a nation should be its servant.

Controversies

Refrain from controversies and useless discussions.

Science

Adopt science from wherever it comes. Seek for science even if you find it in China. Acquisition of knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim, man or woman.

Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave

No poverty is worse than ignorance, no wealth is better than intelligence

Difference of opinion

Difference of opinion among the Muslims is a blessing if it be sincere and for the sake of God but it is the greatest curse if it be for selfish motives and evil desires

Discipline

Hearken and obey, although a negro slave, whose head is like a dried grape be appointed to rule over you

Merchants

A trustworthy and truthful merchant shall be with the prophets and the truthful (siddiq) and the martyrs and the righteous

Quacks

Whoso gives a medicine, being not learned in medical science shall be held responsible (for the result)

Recommending Good Deeds

Whoso recommends the doing of good works, shall have a reward like that of the man who follows his advice and does good

Treatment of Debtors

Whoso desires that God should save him from the distress of the Day of Judgment (resurrection), let him respite his debtor who is hard-up, or let him remit the debt.

Our good works follow us

Three things follow a dead man, (of these) two return and one remains with him, his people, his wealth, and his works follow him, but his people and his wealth return (from his funeral) and his works alone remain with him

When a man dies the angels say, 'What has he sent on before him?' and the son of man says, 'What has he left behind'

Quarrelsomeness

The most hateful of men in the sight of God is the most contentious, quarrelsome fellow

Islam

Islam consisteth in cherishing the profoundest respect for the Commandments of Allah and extending sympathy to His creatures

Islamic Ideal

Imbue yourself with Divine qualities

Trust in God

Trust in God, but tie your camel

Marriage

There is no monasticism in Islam

Marriage is incumbent on all who can afford
or who possess the ability

Forethought

Deliberation in undertakings is pleasing to
God

A good disposition, deliberation in works, and
to adopt the golden mean in all affairs are of the
qualities of prophets

Oppression

That person is not of us who calleth others
to aid him in oppression, neither is he of us who
fighteth for his tribe in injustice, nor he who
dieth in assisting his tribe in tyranny

The Selfish

Shall I tell you the worst among you? Those
who eat alone, and whip the slaves, and give to
nobody

He is not of us who eats his fill and leaves
his neighbour hungry, and he is not of us who
teaches a woman to stray

Envy and Suspicion

Envy and suspicion disintegrate society

Avoid misrepresenting

Refrain from ascribing false motives to

others, neither be suspicious of others' actions
Do not look for the faults of others

Hygiene

Standing water should not be vitiated by nuisance God is pure and loveth purity and cleanliness

The Prophet often brushed his teeth and laid stress on this part of toilet

Orphan

The best Muslim house is that in which an orphan is well cared for

Pride

The proud will not enter the Blissful Abode

Repentance

A sincere repenter of faults is like him who hath committed none

Education and Preaching

Speak to people according to the level of their intellectual capacities

Man's Actions

It is your conduct that will lead you to reward or punishment, as if you had been destined therefor

Thoughtfulness

An hour's contemplation and study of God's creation is better than a year's adoration

The Godly Men

The best of God's obedient elect are those who, when seen remind of God, and the worst of people are the tale-bearers, those who do mischief and separate friends, and seek for the defects of the righteous

Guests

Whoever believeth in God and the hereafter must respect his guest, and he that believeth in God and the hereafter must respect his neighbours, and a believer must speak only good words, or remain silent

It is not right for a guest to stay so long as to incommode his host

O Apostle of God! inform me if I stop with a man, and he does not entertain me, and he afterwards stops at my house am I to entertain him? Mohammad answered, "Entertain him"

It is of my way that the host should come out with his guest to the door of his house

Asceticism

Torment not yourselves lest God punish you

Islam does not allow asceticism

Wish not for death before its time comes

A Muslim who mixes with others and shares their burden is better than one who lives a life of seclusion and contemplation

A Chaste Life

The adultery of the eye is to look with an eye of lust at the wife of another, and the adultery of the tongue is to utter what is forbidden

I swear by God there is nothing which God so condemns as his male and female servant committing adultery

Hypocrite

He is a hypocrite who when he speaketh, speaketh untruth, who making a promise, breaketh it, and who, when trust is reposed in him, faileth in his trust

The Faithful (i.e. Muslims) are those who perform their trust, fail not in their word, and keep their pledge

Motives

Actions shall be judged according to motives
No man is true in the truest sense of the word save he who is true in word, in deed, and in thought

Sympathy

Dost thou love thy Creator? Love thy fellow-creatures first

God is not merciful to him who is not so to mankind They will enter the Blissful Abode who have a true, pure and merciful heart He who is not kind to God's creatures, and to his own children, God will not be kind to him

To cheer the heart of the weary, to remove the suffering of the afflicted—these things have their own reward Who is the most favoured of God? He from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures

He that striveth to supply the want of his brother, God will forgive his sons

All God's creatures are His family, and he is the most beloved of God who trieth to do most good to His creatures

Seek for my goodwill in that of the poor and indigent

Avert the wrath of Allah with charity

O Aiysha' do not turn away the poor without giving them something, be it but half a date

Union With God

There is a polish for everything, and the polish for the heart is the remembrance of Allah

Whosoever loveth to meet God, God loveth
to meet him

God saith "O man, only follow My laws,
and thou shalt become like unto Myself"

Children

Cherish your children

Treat children in such a way as to inculcate
self-respect in them

The Sayings of Hazrat Ali

(*Son-in-Law of the Holy Prophet Muhammad*)

1 The Holy God is such a true God that the manifestations of His nature in the organization of the universe are self-evident proofs of His existence which even the hearts of atheists cannot but admit it

2 He who knows God abstains from self-admiration

3 I pray to God for mercy He is so merciful that He counts your vice as only one vice, and your single virtue as ten virtues

4 One class of people worships God for the sake of reward this is a kind of commercial worship Another class is engaged in worship for the fear of punishment this is a sort of servile worship There is also a third class which worships God with a view to thank Him this is the worship of freemen

5 The chief credit of the generous is that they forget the faults of others which they know

6 When thou hast power of vengeance abstain from the sin of taking it

7 Do not make a promise which thou canst not fulfil, and do not guarantee a thing which thou canst not accomplish

8 Knowledge is better than wealth because the latter thou hast to protect, while the former protects thee

9 Knowledge without practice is like a tree without fruit

10 He who points out thy fault to thee is thy true friend, while he who hides thy defect is thy real enemy

11 Keep secret the good thou hast done to others, and make it known when it is done to thee by others

12 Do good to your parents so that you may be done good to by your sons

13 Do not trust anybody but God do not fear anything but your own sin

14 The key to success lies in patience and perseverance

15 One does not attain to perfection by noble parentage, but by the acquisition of good and admirable qualities

16 Adorn thyself with the following qualities —

(1) To be kind and gracious towards mankind

(2) To avoid revolt and inordination

- (3) To work with one's own hands
 (4) To do justice to one's own self
 (5) To provide oneself for the next world

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A man's worth depends on the nobility
 of his aspirations

* * *

He is really wise whose action attests
 his words

* * *

There is no disease more hopeless than
 want of wisdom

* * *

Knowledge is life and wealth

* * *

To respect the learned is to respect God

* * *

Speech is like medicine, a small dose of
 which cures and excess kills the
 patient

A man is hidden beneath his own tongue

* * *

The miser's wealth goes either to his heirs
 or to the wind

The best of men is he who benefits men

* * *

The short coffers of the charitable man are
 preferable to the abundance of the
 miser

Fasting of mind is to abstain from evil
temptations

* * *

The best investment is the discharge of
duties

Virtue never dies

* * *

A man's value depends on his moral
worth

* * *

No pain is more troublesome than ignorance
Cruelty to the distressed is the worst
cruelty

* * *

Forgiving is the crown of greatness

* * *

Sinning is a disease repentance is its
medicine , and abstaining from it is its
cure

The Sayings of Imam Hasan

(*Grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad*)

Teach others what God has made known to
you

* * *

Do not be greedy

* * *

Good and to the point language is half
education

* * *

There are three deadly things for men
pride, greed, and avarice Pride kills
the religion, greed kills the soul, and
avarice kills morals

* * *

To hoard is bad

* * *

To be charitable in poverty is great

* * *

To hoard is an offence against God

* * *

Learning is to be one's own master

* * *

To worry adds worry

* * *

Do as taught by God

* * *

It is weakness to get worried at a misfor-
tune

It is cowardice to desert friends

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It is godly to forgive

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There are three sections of people the first (section) resembles food, that is, no man can live without it, *i.e.*, their co-operation is very necessary, the second (section) resembles medicine or doses that are not often wanted, *i.e.*, their occasional co-operation is quite sufficient in life, and thirdly, there are people who resemble disease, whom other people do not want, as it is injurious and infectious

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Who is a true Muslim ?

Strong (firm) in faith wise but kind true in belief knowing and forbearing, temperate in wealth and contented in poverty gentle in (using) power, regardful in friendship and patient in misery Neither can anger vanquish him nor excitement baffle him Selfishness impels him not, abundance of wealth disgraces him not, and he becomes not mean for desire or greed Always brave and steady, he will run to rescue the oppressed, and will be kind to the feeble He is neither niggardly nor extravagant, he forgives fault, and overlooks what the ignorant do his own self suffers pain at his hands, but to the world he affords pleasure

